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NPS IN THE NEWS

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SECNAV:

[New SECNAV lays out his priorities for the Navy and Marine Corps](#)

(Marine Corps Times 18 August 21) ... Geoff Ziezulewcz

(Military Times 19 August 21) ... Geoff Ziezulewcz

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EDUCATION:

[Energy Academic Group’s NE3T Workshop Tackles DON Energy Problem with Education](#)

(Navy.mil 19 August 21) ... Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class James Norket

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Is Your Wi-Fi Router Revealing Where You Live?

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ALUMNI:

UTSA welcomes new Army ROTC commander

(UTSA 16 August 21)

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Behind the curtain: Marine officers discuss benefits of working in acquisition

(DVIDS 17 August 21) ... Matt Gonzales

Lt. Col. Wynndee Young wanted to gain knowledge and bolster her skillset... Like many Marines, Andrews has worn many hats during his career. He's served as a company commander, battalion executive officer and a deputy chief of operations, among other roles. After graduating from **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, California, he decided to join the acquisition field.

Lompoc Fire Chief Alicia Welch sworn in during ceremony Tuesday

(Lompoc Record 18 August 21) ... Jennifer Best

Lompoc Fire Chief Alicia Welch and her wife, Rita Sommer, pose after Welch's swearing-in ceremony at Tuesday's City Council meeting... She holds a bachelor's degree from Cal State University, Long Beach, and a master's degree in homeland security from the **Naval Postgraduate School**, and said she chose Lompoc for its values of "humility, customer focus, teamwork, professionalism and family."

UPCOMING NEWS & EVENTS:

August 23-28: [Joint Interagency Field Experimentation \(JIFX\) 21-4](#)

August 24-26: High Energy Laser Technical Area Working Group Meeting

August 26: [SGL with Adm. Craig S. Faller, Commander, U.S. Southern Command: Charting Our Course in the Era of Strategic](#)

September 6: Labor Day (Federal Holiday)

September 20: [WIC Workshop 2021: Hybrid Force 2045](#) (Registration Open)

September 24: [Summer Quarter Graduation Ceremony](#)



SECNAV:

New SECNAV lays out his priorities for the Navy and Marine Corps

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The 78th secretary of the Navy, Carlos Del Toro, who as sworn in Aug. 9, released a message to the fleet laying out the “four Cs” that the former officer sees as vital challenges to the department: China, culture, climate and COVID.

In the Aug. 10 message, Del Toro echoed other military leaders in warning of China’s ascendance and its goal of challenging U.S. military superiority.

“We will not let this happen,” he wrote. “We will deter China’s aggression, protect our national security and preserve the peace.”

When it comes to culture, Del Toro wrote that “every Sailor and Marine of all races, genders, religions and ethnicities must treat one another with dignity and respect,” and that such behavior ensures combat readiness.

He called climate change an issue that “exacerbates every challenge we face, from naval installations to frequent deployments.

The retired Navy officer and businessman has cited China and climate change as the predominant threats facing the force.

“It is also a global struggle for resources that demands ingenuity and innovation,” Del Toro wrote. “It demands solutions that mitigate climate damage while ensuring our operational success and competitive edge.”

On the COVID-19 front, Del Toro called for vaccinating the force “with expedience.”

“If we are not vaccinated, we are neither deployable nor combat ready,” he wrote. “Immediately, the Navy and Marine Corps will make every effort to vaccinate and care for our force and defeat the scourge Covid has inflicted on our troops.”

Del Toro’s stance on vaccinations follows a Pentagon announcement this month that vaccines will soon become mandatory for all servicemembers.

A retired Navy officer who spent 26 years in uniform, including at the helm of a destroyer, Del Toro said in his message that he has “a bias for action” and “will strive to be direct and transparent with you about what we need to accomplish together.”

The safety and welfare of troops “will always be paramount,” he wrote, adding that he was “committed to confronting our maintenance backlog, managing our operational requirements and building our Navy of the future.”

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's memo calls for the services to develop mandatory vaccination plans.

“Serving as your 78th Secretary of the Navy is a high honor,” he wrote. “It also carries grave responsibilities to which I will dedicate all my skill and devotion.”

Del Toro graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1983 and then served in the Navy for 22 years. His assignments included serving as the first commanding officer of the guided-missile destroyer Bulkeley, overseeing ship construction and fleet introduction activities as well as the integration of women into the crew. The vessel was one of the first mixed-gender warships.

He also served as a program manager for what was called Space and Naval Warfare Command — now known as Naval Information Warfare Systems Command — and as a senior executive assistant to the director for program analysis and evaluation within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, where he made top-level decisions about program development and budgets.

After retiring from the Navy, Del Toro founded SBG Technology Solutions, where he has served as president and CEO for 17 years. The company has participated in defense programs related to shipbuilding, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and space systems.

Del Toro was born in Havana, Cuba, and his family came to the U.S. as refugees in 1962, settling in New York City.



The Navy's second Hispanic-American secretary, Del Toro has a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the Naval Academy, a master's degree in national security studies from the Naval War College, a master's degree in space systems engineering from the **Naval Postgraduate School**, as well as a master's degree in legislative affairs from George Washington University. He is married to Betty Del Toro, and they have four children and a granddaughter.

[New SECNAV lays out his priorities for the Navy and Marine Corps \(marinecorpstimes.com\)](http://marinecorpstimes.com)

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EDUCATION:

Energy Academic Group's NE3T Workshop Tackles DON Energy Problem with Education

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The Energy Academic Group (EAG) at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) hosted experts in multiple fields to explore opportunities to utilize education to advance the DON's operational energy issues during the Naval Enterprise Energy Education & Training (NE3T) Workshop, July 27-30.

The EAG is an interdisciplinary group of highly diverse faculty that provides energy-focused graduate education, research and outreach. Dr. Daniel Nussbaum, NPS professor and chair of the EAG, said that the workshop was held to discover ways to include operational energy curricula in the Navy's undergraduate and graduate programs.

"This is a multi-year project," he said. "Ultimately, we would like to create new courses and maybe build in some energy-related topics to already existing programs."

Daniel Temple, a Faculty Associate for Research with the EAG, coordinated and facilitated the workshop.

"The goal of the workshop was to figure out the operational energy learning objectives that officers in the Navy and Marine Corps need to know at certain points in their careers," said Temple.

Operational energy is defined, simply, as "the energy, electricity or gas that is needed to complete a mission," Temple added.

Although NPS has several people who are considered subject-matter experts in all things energy, Temple went above and beyond to get the most out of the workshop.

"We didn't just want to hear from our own people," he said. "We wanted to hear from experts in training and education, community research, and acquisition specialists. We wanted to have multiple facets represented during the workshop."

Temple believes the workshop was a great success and said that multiple ideas were generated during the four-day event.

"A ton of ideas were brought up that we had never thought of," Temple said. "We have some really good examples and plans that we can now present to senior leadership in the DON to get everyone to fully buy in."

Nussbaum also gave the workshop an "A+" and admitted that he was a hard grader. Interdisciplinary problems call for jointly integrated solutions, Nussbaum said, making NPS the ideal location for this event.

"[NPS] has brilliant academics just like they have at other top-tier universities," said Temple. "But NPS academics are solely focused on DON and DOD applications. I don't think you could find a civilian university to solve these problems. You'd be hard pressed to find another school that can do the research, and develop the academic material that NPS can."

<https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/2739666/energy-academic-groups-ne3t-workshop-tackles-don-energy-problem-with-education/>



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The answer is not easy to pin down. On one hand, one could argue that cyber criminals are waging an increasingly debilitating economic war on consumers and businesses in the form of account hijacking, fraud, and extortion. Meanwhile, nation-states — the superpowers and second-tier nations alike — are hotly pursuing strategic advantage by stealing intellectual property, hacking into industrial controls, and dispersing political propaganda at an unheard-of scale.

Now comes a book by John Arquilla, titled *Bitskrieg: The New Challenge of Cyberwarfare*, that lays out who’s doing what, and why, in terms of malicious use of digital resources connected over the Internet. Arquilla is a distinguished professor of defense analysis at the United States **Naval Postgraduate School**. He coined the term ‘cyberwar,’ along with David Ronfeldt, over 20 years ago and is a leading expert on the threats posed by cyber technologies to national security.

Bitskrieg gives substance to, and connects the dots between, a couple of assertions that have become axiomatic:

- Military might no longer has primacy. It used to be the biggest, loudest weapons prevailed and prosperous nations waged military campaigns to achieve physically measurable gains. Today, tactical cyber strikes can come from a variety of operatives – and they may have mixed motives, only one of which happens to be helping a nation-state achieve a geo-political objective.
- Information is weaponizable. This is truer today than ever before. Arquilla references nuanced milestones from World War II to make this point – and get you thinking. For instance, he points out how John Steinbeck used a work of fiction to help stir the resistance movement across Europe.

Steinbeck’s imaginative novel, *The Moon is Down*, evocatively portrayed how ordinary Norwegians took extraordinary measures to disrupt Nazi occupation. This reference got me thinking about how Donald Trump used social media to stir the Jan. 6 insurrection in our nation’s capital.

The big question is: What can – and should — we do about the current situation? There is no easy answer, of course. However, Arquilla comprehensively lays out the key components that somehow will have to blossom and converge — if we have any hope of maintaining economic and geo-political stability in the decades to come. These include stronger encryption, much more efficacious cloud security and some type of behavior-based cyber arms control agreement.

The first two of these are well on their way, based on cybersecurity innovations I had the chance to closely inspect at RSA Conference 2021 and Black Hat USA 2021. Arquilla’s book is a good starting point for discussions to commence, in earnest, on the third component: a cyber arms control pact.

Here are excerpts of an exchange Last Watchdog had with Arquilla about his new book, edited for clarity and length:

LW: Why do we need to radically rethink cyber affairs – from top to bottom?

Arquilla: Rethinking is necessary – redirection, too – because neither market mechanisms nor government policy have addressed the key security issues. For decades, consumers have not demanded secure IT products. Over these same decades, mass publics on both the Right and Left, fearing invasions of privacy, have hamstrung government efforts to improve cybersecurity via regulated standards. Thus, millions of people are made unwitting conscripts in hacker zombie armies, commercial enterprises

hemorrhage out critically important intellectual property, and even intelligence and military organizations find themselves penetrated.

LW: To what extent has the Biden Administration grabbed the bull by its horns?

Arquilla: President Biden's executive order on cybersecurity, signed in May, is a thoughtful first step. I am most impressed with his emphasis on making sure that systems are "fully functional with cloud-computing." This is an important point, though not an end in itself. The Cloud is just someone else's computer; so, in Bitskrieg, I make a point about the need for data mobility. Keep info moving around in the Cloud – and keep it strongly encrypted.

Another key point in Biden's approach calls for giving close attention to supply-chain security – a major undertaking, given how much software is crafted offshore under conditions about which we know little and exercise virtually no control.

But perhaps the most important evidence of Biden's cyber awareness is his recent statement that "if we end up in a war, a real shooting war with a major power, it's going to be as a consequence of a cyber breach." Given that an assassination in Sarajevo sparked World War I, Biden's notion is hardly far-fetched. What happens in cyberspace is ever more likely to have effects in the "real world."

LW: What do we need to learn from the SolarWinds breach?

Arquilla: SolarWinds is a classic Trojan Horse story. The very system designed to enhance security was covertly exploited to undermine security and penetrate commercial and governmental systems, widely and deeply. The most troubling aspect of this sort of intrusion, as I discuss in the book, is that, even though it was apparently just a cyber spying endeavor, the means of ingress were observationally equivalent to what would be done in launching a 'mass disruptive' cyber attack. And in this instance, much careful attention has to be paid to the forensic investigation, to determine whether sleeper malware, capable of later acts of what I call 'cybotage' have been left in place.

LW: What does Colonial Pipeline tell us about ransomware, BEC scams and the general state of enterprise exposure?

Arquilla: What concerns me most about the Colonial Pipeline incident is less the brief disruption itself and more the discourse about what to do. Aside from the debates about whether to pay ransoms, there is a lot of heated rhetoric about retaliation. My take is that the answer to both these debates is to focus on improving cyber defenses. First, key information simply needs to be backed up and cached in the Cloud. Second, the idea of retaliating has to be tempered by the knowledge that the US has the most open, richest set of cyber targets in the world. We should hardly be eager to get into cyber-sniping when we are likely to suffer most. Let's tend to our defenses.

LW: Are you mostly optimistic, or guarded, about technology coming to the rescue?

Arquilla: We could make cybersecurity a lot better, quickly, with the ubiquitous use of strong encryption coupled with data mobility via the Cloud – and perhaps its cousin, [the Fog](#). All that's stopping this are old habits of mind about how to secure cyber systems. But I am greatly heartened to see that crypto and the Cloud are really gaining traction, commercially and in government and the military.

LW: Why do you assert that some form of cyber arms pact is a must?

Arquilla: Virtually all of IT is dual use. That is, it can be used for commercial or conflictual purposes. Computing power can make businesses more profitable and governments more streamlined. But it can also form the basis for a new era of 'weapons-of-mass-disruption.' Now is the time to think about forging agreements about how we will moderate the urge to weaponize IT. And these will have to be based on behavior rather than bean counting of tech arsenals. Much as the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions are behavior-based, in which many countries capable of crafting such capabilities willingly agree to forgo them. Something like this can be done with cyber weaponry.

LW: How far in the future is such a pact?

Arquilla: We could have had a cyber arms control agreement 25 years ago. That was when I was part of the American delegation that met with Russian cyber experts. The Russians were keen on comprehensive, behavior-based cyber arms control. I agreed with them. But when I pushed for such an approach, my masters in the Pentagon scoffed, saying that the Russians only wanted to do this because we were so far ahead of them. My response: "They'll catch up soon." Guess what? They did. And even surpassed us. I devote a chapter to this subject in Bitskrieg.



Today the prospects for reaching such agreement are still good. But Washington has to want to see such controls imposed on cyber. And when I say Washington, I mean civil government, the military, and the intelligence community. Still a tall order.

LW: What's a plausible scenario for how such a pact might come about?

Arquilla: Well, when they met, Presidents Biden and Putin discussed the possibility of a behavior-based cyber arms agreement. And in 2015 President Obama raised the issue with President Xi. If the world's current "Big Three" got on board with this idea, most other countries would, too. Maybe not North Korea. And, as to nonstate hacker networks, they would have a far less permissive environment for mischief-making if no country were willing to host and shelter them

LW: Anything else?

Arquilla: We haven't talked about AI. To my mind, military applications of artificial intelligence will likely influence strategic affairs in the 21st Century as profoundly as the aircraft did in the 20th Century. On land, at sea, and from cyberspace to outer space. That said, there is an effort gaining traction at the United Nations to outlaw Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS). I think this effort will falter, as have most efforts to eliminate weapons, from the longbow to nukes. Better to think through how AI can be pursued and held to the same standards as humans are when it comes to the laws of war about not attacking civilians and exercising force proportionately. AI is seen primarily through a technical prism; it should be seen more through an ethical one.

[Author Q&A: In modern cyberwarfare 'information security' is one in the same with 'national security' - Security Boulevard](#)

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Is Your Wi-Fi Router Revealing Where You Live?

(Money Talks News 20 August 21) ... Chris Kissell

"That's not supposed to be possible," researchers say. But for millions of people, it is.

Your Wi-Fi router could be sending out a strong signal to everyone about where you live.

Tom's Guide reports that during the recent Black Hat information-security conference in Las Vegas, researchers unveiled findings that show that routers — devices that send out Wi-Fi signals — often leak their hardware ID numbers through their internet protocol (IP) addresses.

This information then can be connected to maps that show the street locations of Wi-Fi networks. Such maps are readily available to the public.

The consequences could be unsettling. As Tom's Guide reports:

"So now, that angry guy who you argued with in that heated online discussion the other day could find out exactly where you live, even if he doesn't know your name. That's not supposed to be possible."

Researchers Rob Beverly and Erik Rye of the **Naval Postgraduate School's** Center for Measurement and Analysis of Network Data use a tool they developed — IPvSeeYou — to scan the internet for IP addresses that possibly reveal gateway routers' unique ID numbers. The tool then matches the leaked numbers to 450 million geolocated Wi-Fi networks available in public databases.

Beverly and Rye found more than 60 million routers that reveal these ID numbers and were able to "precisely geolocate" around 12 million residential routers.

To make matters worse, Beverly and Rye were able to locate other home routers that used the same internet service providers (ISPs) as the routers with hardware IDs exposed online. As the researchers concluded: "Simply living near [these exposed] routers is a privacy threat."

If all of this makes you nervous, there are steps you can take to reduce the odds that your whereabouts will be revealed to others.

For starters, Tom's Guide says this is not an issue for anyone who has a router that is separate from their modem (the device the cable or phone line connects to).

But if your router and modem are combined — known as a home gateway — you should disable IPv6. If you purchased your own home gateway, check the instruction manual for how to do this.



If your ISP leased a home gateway to you, call the provider and ask how to disable IPv6. If the representative doesn't understand your request, Tom's Guide suggests asking to speak to a technician.
[Is Your Wi-Fi Router Revealing Where You Live? \(moneytalksnews.com\)](http://moneytalksnews.com)

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ALUMNI:

UTSA welcomes new Army ROTC commander

(UTSA 16 August 21)

On June 1, Lieutenant Colonel Timothy S. Ball joined the University of Texas at San Antonio as the new Professor of Military Science of the UTSA Army ROTC program.

Lieutenant Colonel Ball is a U.S. Army Special Forces officer who has worked with partner forces across Europe, Africa, and in Iraq over the last 16 years. As a Special Forces officer, his career has focused on irregular warfare and partnered operations.

"I found a unique opportunity to give back to the Army by accepting the jobs at UTSA as the Professor of Military Science," Ball said. "This assignment gives you an opportunity to mentor and develop the next generation of Army officers, and prepare them for the challenges they'll face as brand new lieutenants."

Ball was recently promoted to Lieutenant Colonel at a ceremony on August 6.

Ball holds a B.A. in Political Science from Texas A&M University and an M.S. in Defense Analysis (Irregular Warfare) from the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey.

The UTSA Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) is an educational program which combines college electives in military science with practical and leadership training. The military science courses are designed to prepare men and women for succeeding in college, becoming Army officers, and developing in their chosen career.

Since its establishment in 1982, the Roadrunner Battalion has grown in both prestige and size. Currently, the Roadrunner Battalion is one of 36 universities within the 5th Brigade Army ROTC footprint and host school for San Antonio College, Wayland Baptist University, Texas A&M San Antonio and Northwest Vista College.

[Tim Ball | Academic Affairs | UTSA | University of Texas at San Antonio](#)

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Behind the curtain: Marine officers discuss benefits of working in acquisition

(DVIDS 17 August 21) ... Matt Gonzales

Lt. Col. Wynndee Young wanted to gain knowledge and bolster her skillset.

The former operational contract support and supply specialist decided to apply for an acquisition officer billet to continue growing and learning as a Marine. She joined the acquisition community as a contracting officer in 2009—when the job was in high demand to support operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"My mentors and advocates encouraged my decision to apply to become an acquisition officer," said Young. "I thought it would be a great opportunity for a supply officer like myself to expand my expertise."

Young eventually transitioned from a contracting officer to a ground acquisition officer. Today, she serves as a program analyst for the Wargaming Capability at Marine Corps Systems Command. In this role, Young analyzes the cost, schedule and performance associated with developing wargaming capabilities for the future Marine Corps Wargaming and Analysis Center.



She says the career path has helped her grow as a Marine. It has enabled Young to support various teams during several deployments, gain a better understanding of the acquisition process and learn the myriad ways the acquisition community supports the warfighter.

“Throughout my journey, I’ve learned there are great opportunities within the acquisition community,” said Young. “Marine Corps Systems Command offers those opportunities for talented Marines.”

MCSC is the acquisition arm of the Marine Corps. The command is responsible for equipping and sustaining Marines with the most capable and cost-effective systems for expeditionary and crisis-response operations.

Each year, the command seeks skilled Marines to join the acquisition workforce. This month, the Marine Corps will release a solicitation for the 8059/8061 military occupational specialty. The 8059 occupational field comprises aviation officers, while the 8061 field involves ground acquisition Marines.

Marine acquisition officers take requirements from concept exploration to the deployment of a piece of equipment. Their responsibilities involve keeping a program within budget, on schedule, and ensuring a system is logistically supportable.

Brig. Gen. A.J. Pasagian, MCSC’s commander, emphasized the importance of Marine acquisition officers in helping the command fulfill its mission. He said their composite of skills, knowledge, and experience make them an ideal fit as an acquisition officer.

“A Marine acquisition officer is a leader,” said Pasagian. “They are recognized by our Corps as essential to force development, representing the Marine Corps’ commitment to investment and the need to outpace and defeat adversaries in any clime and place.”

A Broader Perspective

During his time in acquisition, Col. Tim Hough has built an illustrious career.

In 1998, the Stafford, Virginia, native completed Officer Candidates School and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. He completed stints as a platoon and company commander, project officer and branch head before graduating from The Command and Staff College in Quantico, Virginia.

Upon becoming an acquisition officer, he transferred to MCSC in 2012. He has served as a project officer, team lead and program manager, supervising teams of Marines and civilians working to achieve a common goal: equip the warfighter.

The amount of information attained over the past 13 years has provided Hough with a deeper understanding of the acquisition and sustainment of life-saving equipment, he said. It is an aspect of the Marine Corps he was unaware of before becoming an acquisition officer.

“Working in the acquisition field has given me a broader perspective of how the Marine Corps operates,” said Hough. “More importantly, it has shown me how the Marine Corps builds capability in defense of our national interests.”

In 2021, Hough was promoted to program manager for Advanced Amphibious Assault at Program Executive Officer Land Systems. In this role, he is responsible for the development, fielding and sustainment of the Amphibious Combat Vehicle. He also oversees the sustainment of the legacy Assault Amphibian Vehicle.

Hough says working in acquisition is consistently challenging—another rewarding aspect of the field.

“A big challenge an acquisition officer experiences is speed,” said Hough. “We all want things done quickly and sometimes moving at the speed at relevance is not fast enough. But it takes time to ensure the equipment is both operational and can perform to its expectations.”

Lt. Col. Kyle Andrews, an acquisition officer serving as the product manager for Assault Amphibious Vehicles at PEO Land Systems, said keeping up with the evolution of technology is continuously challenging. He underscored the countless hours and tiresome workdays needed to research, assess and implement new and improving technology in an ever-evolving battlefield.

However, like Hough, Andrews relishes in these situations.

“Working in acquisition is a great opportunity because of those challenges,” said Andrews. “It allows us to grow as Marines.”

Like many Marines, Andrews has worn many hats during his career. He’s served as a company commander, battalion executive officer and a deputy chief of operations, among other roles. After



graduating from **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, California, he decided to join the acquisition field.

“I was at a point in my career where I could either go the battalion command route or go the acquisition route,” explained Andrews. “I decided to go the acquisition route because I felt that it offered more opportunities to give back to the Marine Corps.”

As an acquisition officer, Andrews oversaw the acquisition of an unmanned naval defense system before transitioning into his current role. He now manages the divestment of the AAV as the Marine Corps procures its replacement in the Amphibious Combat Vehicle.

He consistently interacts with teams of talented Marines, civilians and contractors when acquiring, developing and fielding a product. These professionals offer expertise and advice that Andrews considers when making critical decisions that affect the warfighter.

“The job constantly keeps you engaged with Marines and allows you to work with engineers, logisticians and other talented individuals,” said Andrews. “Not a lot of Marines have that opportunity in their career.”

A ‘truly gratifying’ experience

Not every Marine qualifies to be an acquisition officer.

Marine officers interested in becoming an 8059 or 8061 must apply to the annual Acquisition Primary MOS 8059/8061 Selection Board. The solicitation to be released by the Marine Corps this month contains the minimum qualification requirements for applying.

Applicants must typically be a major or lieutenant colonel. They must also be eligible for a secret security clearance in a certified Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act Level II in a primary acquisition career field and be an unrestricted officer.

Young encourages qualifying Marines to apply. She said the acquisition field offers the opportunity to learn strategic or enterprise support required to maintain the longevity and innovation the Marine Corps is currently experiencing.

“You learn what it takes to be a stronger force and everything that goes into achieving the commandant’s Force Design 2030 goals,” said Young. “It is also incredibly rewarding as a Marine acquisition officer to see the products we acquire being used by Marines and Sailors. That is truly gratifying.”

Hough emphasized the importance for Marines to understand the acquisition process—from how the Marine Corps awards contracts to the significance of sustaining equipment upon fielding. They can then use this knowledge to their advantage throughout their careers.

He said having a greater understanding of the acquisition process, including the intricacies of the “business side” of the Marine Corps, will be fundamentally important to Marines as they progress through their careers.

“If they stay in acquisition, great, but if they don’t, they now understand how gear is provided to them,” said Hough. “More importantly, they now have touch-points to whom they can reach back for answers to any questions about certain capabilities. Marine Corps Systems Command is the connecting file from the Fleet Marine Force to Headquarters Marine Corps as it relates to capability.”

As Young, Andrews and Hough explained, being an acquisition officer is a critical way to provide the warfighter with the capabilities needed to achieve Marine Corps goals, defeat adversaries and protect the United States. They help field technologies that will support Marines for years to come.

“Being an acquisition officer has given me a behind-the-curtain view that I did not have as a young officer and has been immensely rewarding when I consider the impact I have had on the Marine Corps,” said Hough. “It’s been quite a journey.”

[DVIDS - News - Behind the curtain: Marine officers discuss benefits of working in acquisition \(dvidshub.net\)](https://dvidshub.net/news/behind-the-curtain-marine-officers-discuss-benefits-of-working-in-acquisition)

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Lompoc Fire Chief Alicia Welch sworn in during ceremony Tuesday

(Lompoc Record 18 August 21) ... Jennifer Best

Lompoc Fire Chief Alicia Welch and her wife, Rita Sommer, pose after Welch's swearing-in ceremony at Tuesday's City Council meeting.

The Lompoc City Council officially welcomed Fire Chief Alicia Welch into the fold with a swearing-in ceremony at Tuesday's council meeting.

The ceremony was followed by a break for a social time in council chambers before the council returned to address the remaining agenda.

"I don't take the role of being fire chief lightly," Welch said.

Welch added that she recognized the importance of serving as a role model, particularly as a woman in the field, and thanked other fire professionals who have served as her mentors, her parents and her wife for their support throughout her career.

Lompoc Fire Department's first female chief brings resilience, experience to the job

The search for the Lompoc Fire Department's new chief ended with Alicia Welch, who will be sworn-in during a badge-pinning ceremony at the City Council meeting on Aug. 17.

Welch, a veteran fire service professional with 29 years of experience in firefighting, was the fire chief for the city of Golden, Colorado, from November 2018 until this summer. Previously, she served in various capacities with the Los Angeles City Fire Department between 1990 to 2017, rising in ranks from firefighter to battalion chief.

She holds a bachelor's degree from Cal State University, Long Beach, and a master's degree in homeland security from the **Naval Postgraduate School**, and said she chose Lompoc for its values of "humility, customer focus, teamwork, professionalism and family."

"All these core values I've been living and striving for my whole career, they have those same values here, and it's a department that is full of great people," Welch said.

The council approved Welch's appointment to the post in June. She took over the helm Aug. 9 from interim Fire Chief Brian Federmann, who has taken a position with Santa Barbara City Fire Department.

"This is a man who, for a year and a half, led a department through a pandemic, through a budget cycle, through some really big challenges, and he led with his heart. ... Some of the work he was able to accomplish is really amazing ... You're going to make a great fire chief someday," Welch said.

Federmann filled the role in August 2020 following the retirement of former Chief Gerald Kuras.

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